

Sketch-Book No 7  
From February 22d 1837 –  
To March 15<sup>th</sup> 1837 –



No. 1. Small Pox

In a letter from my Daughter Adeline, of the 13<sup>th</sup> of February, she states that the small pox is prevalent in Boston; that a number of cases had occurred in her neighborhood, and that a Mrs Lord of Spring street, died of the disease a few days since. It was supposed that she had been vaccinated 30 years ago; but it turns out that this is a mistake.

By the advice of Dr. Bigelow, my Daughter's family have all been revaccinated as a precaution; from which it appears he is not certain that vaccination is a certain preventative to the small pox. or thinks it possible that time may obliterate the effect.

As the process is harmless and may test the genuineness of the first process, I think the practise is advisable; and it is to the regretted that any should so far neglect their duty to themselves, as to omit vaccination in one instance at least. The discovery of Dr. Jenner is an important one, and none but the most stupid, will neglect it. Previous

Previous to the discovery of the small pox was one of the most terrible diseases that affected the human race, and a residence in a seaport city was very unsafe with all the precautions that were used.

At this time it has almost ceased to alarm. But it is important that the practice of vaccination should be kept up, and that all should go through the operation in season, under the care of a regular and skillful physician. And it is a good practice to insert the fact of vaccinations in the family record, with the name of the physician who performed it, though this is generally omitted. This however, I believe, I have omitted; but if my recollection is correct, all my family have been vaccinated by Dr. William S Williams the father of the present Dr Stephen W. Williams of this town. In the time of the Revolutionary war, I was inoculated with the small pox and had it very lightly in a pest-house, when I saw it in all its stages and have since been among it.

## 2. Dr Noah Webster's Opinion of the mode of instruction in the Girard College

In the month of September last David McClure addressed a letter to Dr Webster, and a pamphlet containing a system of education for the College, requesting his opinion of the same.

In reply Dr. Webster generally approves of the plan; but thinks a material defect is a want of a professorship of the English language. The writings, he says, of our most distinguished scholars are often deformed by false orthography and false syntax, and by the misapplication of words.

"If our statesman, he adds, were accurately acquainted with the language, it is to be surmised they would not use comptroller (a counter of the rolls) when they mean controller, an officer whose business it is to control, or check the ~~the~~ accounts of other officers. If military gentlemen were perfectly versed in English they would not use the word redoubt ~~an outwork in fortification~~ (a doubting again) when

they mean a redout, an outwork in fortification. If the clergy were accurately instructed in the meaning of words, we should not hear from the pulpit a stanza called a verse. If our citizens were well instructed in English, we should not hear such phrases as a balance of men or troops in a company remaining after a detachment have been made. If our public men were well instructed in the language, they would not venture to call the privileges of banking and manufacturing companies in this country monopolies; for citizens, well instructed in our language and in the true meaning of words, would consider such a misapplication of terms an indignity offered to their understanding. If English words were correctly understood, we should never hear men talk about the aristocracy of the country: since it is not and by our constitution there cannot be any such thing in the U States.”

In his Dictionary Dr. Webster defines Aristocracy a government by nobles, and here it is, no such is known in our constitutions. But suppose we have among us men of great property and talent who combine their influence and do in fact ~~in~~ ~~fluence~~ sway the people in their dictions and the enactment of the laws, is there great impropriety in saying these people are an aristocracy, even though they are not thus constituted by our Constitution: and in all countries, whether free or otherwise, there are such men, and by what term can they be more approximately be estimated than by the term aristocracy? So the term monopoly is proper when the sole power of vending is given to one or more men, to the exclusion of the same power in others; even though this grant from government is unconstitutional it does not follow that monopolies will not be granted. If granted they will not be monopolies, because they are unconstitutional

shall we then be deprived of the term, because the constitution gives no power to grant them? So there is no power in the constitution to pass ex post facto laws; but if passed, they are such, though contrary to the Constitution, and by this name they would be known.

With respect to the orthography of words it appears to me to be of little consequence what it is, provided there be a uniform system in our language and all words clearly defined; and whether they are derived from the Greek, Latin or any other language is a matter of indifference, so long as they are uniformly spelt and defined. Our linguists may amuse themselves by looking up derivations, but the use of words in a country ought to fix their standard; and this once adopted, no matter what are their derivations.

The multiplication of Dictionaries with such a diversity of orthography as we find in our language; is an



embarrassment which ought not to exist. Let us have a standard in the English language to which all may appeal; and as Dr Webster has long attended to the subject, and published large and numerous works I think it would be wise to adopt his Dictionary as this standard. Whether his orthography and definitions are the best that could be contrived may be left out of the question. If he has omitted important words let them be supplied; we only insist that there shall be a uniformity of orthography as well as of definitions.

In his letter to Mr McClure, Dr Webster expresses his disapprobation of our fracture in the system for instruction in the Girard College. As he understands it, the will of the founder prohibits instruction in the Christian religion, and precludes clergymen from being trustees, and from having any concern with the education of the pupils. Dr Webster thinks this a

great defect, and says, “this religion is the most important and one of the first things in which all children under a free government ought to be instructed.”

The will of the founder, Mr Girard, it is presumed, does not prohibit instruction in the principles or morality or a religion in which all enlightened men agree; but his design was to keep the young mind free to choose his religion, after he is well instructed in other branches of knowledge;- to keep him free to choose his system without being shackled by education. If it should be found that pupils who have been thus instructed, would reject the Christian religion, would it not be an argument against Christianity. If science is at war with Christianity, what is the inference we are to draw? Surely not a favorable one for Christianity.

But the difficulty of introducing religious instruction into our seminaries of learning, arises from the diversity of systems which prevail

in the country. The adherents of each system will be opposed to others differing from their own. Those who believe the doctrine of the Trinity is an essential part of Christianity will enforce it on their pupils; the unitarians who believe the doctrine is not to be found in the Bible, will instil unto the pupil, as an essential, the unity of God, and then a continual contest will be kept up so long as systems of religion are taught in our seminaries. The design of the Girard I suppose was to avoid this difficulty.

Dr Webster, in speaking of the Christian religion as the basis of government, says "I do not mean an ecclesiastical establishment, a creed, or rites, forms, and ceremonies, or any compulsion of conscience. I mean primitive Christianity in its simplicity as taught by Christ and his apostles."

Here an important question is involved\_ what is the "primitive Christianity, in its simplicity, as taught

by Christ and his apostles”? The orthodox believer says it is his system, and the unitarian that it is his. How then is this question to be decided? Most clearly by giving young men all the instruction, in general knowledge, which will furnish them with data for solving it; and this appears to have been the plan of Mr Girard.

The exclusion of Clergymen from the management of the College, it is presumed was from the impression ~~reflection~~ that they were often arrogantly tenacious of their respective systems of divinity, and might, if admitted to share in its management, introduce unfavorable contentions and retard the progress of pure knowledge.

If Christianity is well founded men of general knowledge will embrace it; but if it lacks this basis, the belief of those who have been taught it in any form in their youth, will add nothing to the evidence in its favor.

In summing up his remarks Dr Webster says “The experience of the whole world evinces that all the restraints of

religion and law are often insufficient to control the selfish and malignant passions of men- any system of calculation therefore, which limits instruction to the arts and sciences, and rejects the aids of religion, in forming the characters of citizens, is essentially defective”.

“In giving this view of my opinions, I am aware that I expose myself to the obloquy of modern philosophers. But then I disregard; for I have, in support of my opinions, the experience of the whole civilized world, as well as the proofs presented by inspired truth, from the beginning to the end of the Bible! – that book which the benevolent Creator has furnished for the express purpose of guiding human reason in the path of safety, and the only book which can remedy, or essentially mitigate, the evils of a licentious world.”

“From a firm conviction of these truths I firmly believe, that without material changes in the principles now prevalent in the United States; our republican Government is

is destined to be of short duration.”

Dr Webster seems to be much admired but has he sufficient ground for his fears? Is it true that licentious principles are gaining the ascendancy, and that pure Christianity is disappearing in the United States? If so, what can be the cause. Our Colleges, Academies, Common-schools, and the desks of our numerous Churches, are all under the instruction & superintendence of Christian people, in which our youth are and for a long time have been, instructed in the Christian religion. But, according to Dr Webster, “without material changes in the principles now prevalent” we are destined to ruin. If this is really the case may we not inquire, whether there is not some defect in our modes of education, as well as our systems of religion?

In France at the commencement of the revolution the Christian religion was nearly banished from the nation and to what was this owing?

Might it not have been from the corrupt System of Roman Catholics, which had disquieted the men of science, and who, supposing to be the system of the Bible, threw the whole aside as useless? If then we are verging to the same point may we not attribute it to something of a similar cause. But I am far from adopting Dr Webster's sentiments, and believe his alarms groundless.

In his long and deep study of Language, and the compilation of his Dictionary may he not through inadvertence hence run into the common error of estimating the religion of a people by the ~~[ ]~~ and fanaticism found ~~among them~~ by the fanatical zeal which embraces dogmas, that a more enlightened view of the scripture has exploded?

In this suggestion we would not be understood, as intimating that the Dr. is defective in astute discriminations on subjects he has carefully investigated. We mean to say, that men eminent in one branch of knowledge are sometimes found who are very

limited in others. A philologist is not necessarily a natural Philosopher, nor the latter a metaphysician. But he who has extended his [researches into the whole circle of Science, must be much better prepared for discovering recondite truths, than he who has limited his studies to particular branches.

Dr. Cotton Mather was esteemed the learned man of his day, and as a philologist we are not disposed to detract from his merits. But no enlightened man of the present day can peruse his Magnalia without a sigh or a smile at his credulity: And when it is found that he was an advocate for the delusion of witchcraft, and instrumental in inflicting the punishment of death on supposed witches, all enlightened men are compelled to condemn his burning zeal to regret his want of judgment, and to lament that



a mind so capable, should have been obfuscated by the worst fanaticism.

We would not however attempt to run a parallel between Dr Webster and Dr Mather. We name the latter as an instance of great distinction in a learned man; and merely suggest that the former, by extending his researches into other branches of science, which have not particularly engaged his attention, would divest himself of the fears he entertains respecting the Religion of its U States, and lead him to the opinion that the pursuits of ~~science~~ the exact sciences, will not incite enemies to pure and unadulterated Christianity.

### 3. Resuscitation of Free Masonry

It is rumored in the Bridgewater Republican, that measures are in train by the Grand Lodge to revive its subordinate lodges throughout the State and that several meetings have

already been held in a neighboring town by some of the deluded followers, and that one individual has been found silly enough to bow his neck to this blood stained and iniquitous institution. The Editor hopes this is not so; and in his remarks advises antimasons to have an eye upon those who take an active part in this reinstating the lodges. Let a mark, says he be set upon them so that they may be known and held up to the scorn and ridicule of the world. The moment they undertake to raise its blood stained banners, we can ensure them that we are here, with enough to back us, and shall pursue those who are known to take part in it, until they are consigned to that endless oblivion to which masonry itself is destined.

Whether the rumor is well founded I am in doubt, though I always believe there would be a resurrection of the infernal order, the moment they found the people quiet

and that they could do it safely, or without exciting alarm. But I never supposed it would revive precisely under the old form. The cut throat oaths which have become disgusting even to the members, will probably be laid aside, among the “rubbish” and others substituted; the mock death and resurrection of Hiram Abiff, and the disgusting ceremonies in the mark master’s and royal arch degrees, particularly the burning bush, the passage of the arch, and disent into the vault in the latter, will probably be abolished. And why, it is asked, should the numbers wish to revive it under any form? Those who make this inquiry, still remain ignorant of its main design, which was to manage and direct the members, how to vote at important elections. Since the masonic murder of Morgan, this power has in a degree, ceased, or been deranged, but the leaders in the higher orders do not despair of a restoration of their power. Let the people watch them.

#### 4. Agricultural Survey

A Bill is now (February 28) before our Legislation which proposes to authorize the Gov. and Council to appoint some suitable and competent person to make an agricultural survey of the Commonwealth, and a Summary of this survey to be furnished to the Gov. every six months, until the whole is completed. The salary to the Surveyor not to exceed 2500 dollars per annum.

A survey of this kind would no doubt be useful for the agricultural interest, if made by an ingenious philosopher, who has a taste for agriculture; but much time would be required to complete the work. England, France & some other nations, have made these surveys but our Legislature seems to forget that the expense attending them may lie beyond the ability of little Massachusetts. We have made a Geological, and are now making a Trigonometrical Survey, which has and will be at

tended with considerable expense,  
perhaps greater than out means, or beyond the ben  
efits which may result from them.

With a larger extent of territory,  
and population like New York, we might better  
afford the cost.

One great obstruction to enterprises  
of this kind in Massachusetts, is the  
great and unnecessary exchange of our  
Legislature, composed of about 600  
members, amounting to more than  
100,000 dollars per annum. If  
New York with her 128 representatives  
is able to embark in great works  
for the public benefit, it is no example  
for us to follow. When our represent  
ation shall be reduced in proportion  
to theirs, we may think of public  
works of a similar character; but  
even then, on a much less scale.

Limitation of expenses is not less im  
portant for small state, than for in  
dividuals of small property. When  
we shall duly curtail our public expense  
we may undertake works for the  
public; but let us not forget the

sound maxim, that small means must be limited to small measures.

In the Report of the Committee who presented the bill, they say “The State of New-York, with a noble liberality, has appropriated 10,000 dollars in a single year in the dissemination of agricultural knowledge among the people. Shall Massachusetts, which has been wont to take the lead in patriotic and liberal enterprises be distanced in the course”?

The Committee should have remembered that Massachusetts has not been sharing in the appropriation of money for the encouragement of agricultural improvements. By looking at our treasury ~~accounts~~ books, they would find large items of this kind allowed to our agricultural societies, it is believed much by and those of the State of New-York, when compared with our means. Let us then not be deceived by such ebullitions of zeal, calculated only for the unthinking. We have too much of this.

### 5. Memoranda

My son Arthur W. Hoyt, at Richmond Virginia February 23 informs that he shall leave that place for St. Louis in Missouri; where he is engaged in his business, whether on a Rail Road or a Canal, he has not informed; and intimates that he may return to the North in the summer.

St. Louis is said to be a town of some note, on the west bank of the Mississippi, 18 miles by water, below the junction of the Missouri, in Lat.  $38^{\circ}..36$ ; the town elevated and healthy, containing, in 1830 of all colors, 6694 inhabitants. In 1818 one hundred houses were said to be added to the place, and 3 or 4 Gazettes are printed there. Distance from Pittsburgh to mouth of Ohio, according to Dr Drake, 949 miles; thence to St. Louis 176 miles = 1125 miles. From Washington 856 miles, I suppose on a right line. The Long. is laid down at  $89^{\circ}..36$  west from Greenwich. Washington at 77-01-48 W  
Diff = 12-34-12

Mr Hogg who

is now at Deerfield, and who saw Arthur at Richmond, before he had left that place, informs me that he is engaged by the Gov. of Illinois, to construct a Railway, of 8 or 10 miles in that state, nearly opposite to St. Louis; the road intended for the conveyance of Coal from a rich bed to the Mississippi

To a native of New England the Mississippi must strike the eye as a grand object; its length from its source, including its windings, is estimated at about 3000 miles and of various widths. At the mouth of the Missouri it is said to be 1 ½ miles but at St Louis ¾ only, and that it generally freezes over in the month of December; of course the weather in the winter must be severe.

The opinion heretofore entertained that in corresponding latitudes the temperature is higher in the Mississippi valley than between the mountains and the Atlantic, is by late winters, supposed to be erroneous; but this



the  
 ‡See also Atwater on the winds of  
 west. Silliman's Journal Vol. 1, p. 276

I think is not certainly proved, though said to be deduced from thermometrical observations. See artt. US. 18 vol. Ed. Encyclopaedia ‡

Situated as St Louis is near the center of the valley of the Mississippi and near the mouth of the Missouri, it must in time become a great city, and perhaps ultimately the seat of Government for the United States, though other places on the River may check its progress. By the aid of Steam boats it has an easy intercourse with New Orleans, 1200 miles (by the River) below. Whether it will prove a healthy situation for Northern people remains to be shown.

A spirit of adventure and enterprize seems to be natural to young men, and perhaps it is well that it is so. But it sometimes happens that their projects are not founded on prudence & their expectations are disappointed. The opposite extreme may be too strong, an attachment to the place of our birth, which keeps us from seizing real advantages.

Were I to migrate from New England  
 to a new Country, I know no part  
 of the United States, I should prefer  
 to that on the Mississippi about the  
 Latitude of St Louis in Missouri; and  
 which side of the River is preferable  
 I am not certain. The State of Illinois  
 opposite to St Louis is the most settled  
 part ~~of the State~~ of that State, and the Navigation  
 of the Mississippi affords great facil-  
 ities for communication with all  
 parts of the western country But  
 as in all new Countries, the first set-  
 tlers will be liable to fevers, until  
~~they are~~ well cultivated; and  
 this was the case with the early  
 settlers on the Connecticut in Massa-  
 chusetts, as well as the western part  
 of the State of New-York, which is now  
 deemed healthy. A position south  
 of the State of Mississippi is by no  
 means advis-able for a new England  
 man, unless it be in the high coun-  
tries of North and south Carolina,  
 which are said to be as salubrious  
 as the Northern States.           The

The following is the population of Several Counties in Missouri and Illinois near the Mississippi, according to the census of 1830.

County of St Louis in Missouri	14,907
Mongan in Illinois	12,709
Greene in do	7,664
Madison in do	6,229
St Clair in do	7,092
Monroe in do	2,119
Randolph in do	4,436

The 4 last counties are on the Mississippi, opposite or ~~below~~ above St Louis. Mongan and Green bound west on the Illinois River, having Pike and Calhoun on the west, which extend to the Mississippi, with a population of 2393 and 1090. At this time probably the population of all the counties is considerably increased.

Sangamon County, on a river of that name, east of Mongan, counted 12,960 inhabitants in 1830, and was then the most populous of any in the State of Ill. The northern Counties had but five inhabitants. Whole population of State 157,575 of whom 746 are slaves.

## 6. Termination of Jacksons Administration.

This day, March 4<sup>th</sup>, President Jackson retires from his office and is reduced to a level with his fellow citizens. He retires with many achievements among the people it is true, but a respectable number of respectable men must sincerely rejoice at this political exit. His enthusiasm has been boisterous and has created violent parties throughout the United States. If his intentions have been good we must excuse him ~~errors~~; but if otherwise, he as well as the people, may feel their affects. We may however tax his judgment if he designed no evil. For ourselves we think his administration has been a mixture of good and evil; but we never thought him ~~to be~~ the man to be placed at the head of our government. In his various measures he has evinced too much obstinacy, for a President of a free people; His projects, let them be what they might,

have been pursued with a per-  
 tenacity unbecoming in a sound polit-  
 ical man; and with the chain of  
 State he has left the country in a de-  
 gree of confusion from which it may  
 not recover in a short time. We do  
 not however condemn his whole  
 administration, for we think he has,  
 in some instances, pursued a judicious  
 course; but we regret that this have  
 not been more frequent. Mr Van  
 Buren, we trust, will pursue a dif-  
 ferent course, and restore harmony  
 among the people. He may make him-  
 self popular with the contending par-  
 ties, by pursuing a moderate course; but  
 if he neglects this ~~course~~, he can  
~~ean~~ hardly ensure the name of a  
 wise man, or that of a patriot.

The examples and precepts of Washing-  
 ton are before him, and if he follows  
 them he cannot be at a loss in the  
 path of his duty. These like the pro-  
 positions of Euclid for the geometer, will  
 be safe guides. Let him follow them  
 & prove a blessing to his country.

### 7. Geological Survey

Another Geological Survey of Massachusetts is proposed by a Committee of the Legislature.

One would suppose that all that is now essential in regard to Geology of the State, was included in Professor Hitchcock's Report; but the committee are of a different opinion, and seem to think that Report insufficient.

The remarks we have made under Agricultural Survey (page 18) will apply to this project. Viz the great and unnecessary expense of the Government of this little State is a complete bar to enterprises of this sort.

8. Geography and History of the Western States, or the Mississippi Valley. 2 Vol. 8 vo (Printed at Cincinnati 1828) By Timothy Flint.

Mr Flint calls this a Condensed work, but we can hardly consider it in that light when we enumerate 1112 pages of common sized octavo.

On the opposite side the mighty Missouri  
 bringing its turbid and sweeping mass  
 of waters at right angles to the Mississippi.

It is in fact, the most full, and we believe, the most authentic work that has been published of the western States. The author is a resident of Ohio, and has made extensive tours through the valley of the Mississippi, and appears to be a gentleman of science well suited for his undertaking. In general his descriptions are handsome, well written and seem to have the marks of accuracy; and for the ~~im~~-emigrant to that Country, the work is of the utmost importance. We give a few extracts.

View from the bluffs on the Mississippi  
pi, opposite to the mouth of Missouri.

“At this place the American Bottom terminates and the bluffs come in to the River. The bluffs bound the eastern banks of the view there to the mouth of the Illinois. From these bluffs we contemplate one of the most imposing and beautiful landscapes in the world. ‡The eye takes a long distance of the outline of the Missouri valley, bounded on either side with an indistinct

and blue line of hills. Above it is the vast and most beautiful Mamette prairie, dotted with green islands of wood, and skirted at the farthest ken of the eye with hills and forests. Above you, on the same shore, is the valley of the Illinois, itself bounded by hoary and magnificent bluffs of a peculiar character. The river brings in its creeping waters by a deep bed, that seems about as straight as a canal. You have in view the valleys and bluffs of two noble streams, that join their waters to the Mississippi. You see the Mississippi changed to a turbid and sweeping stream, with jagged and indented banks before you. You see its calm and placid water above the Missouri. On the opposite prairie there are level meadows, wheat fields, corn fields, smokes ascending from houses and cabins, vast flocks of domestic cattle, distinct indications of agriculture and improvements blended with the grand features



of nature. The clumps of trees, lakes, ponds and flocks of sea fowl, whaling their flight over them; in short, what air of grandeur, or beauty, nature can furnish to soothe, and to enrapture.”

The American Bottom mentioned above is described as follows.

The bottom commencing not far below Kaskaskia, and stretching along the eastern shore of the Mississippi for a distance of 80 miles, terminating a little distance below the point, opposite the mouth of Missouri, is from 3 to 6 miles wide, and is divided into two belts. The first, bordering the Mississippi, is a heavily timbered bottom. The next belt, reaching to the foot of the perpendicular bluffs, is prairie of the richest quality, covered, in the season of vegetation, with grass and flowers. Parts of this tract have been in cultivation with the exhausting crop of maize 100 years, without producing apparently the slightest exhaustion of the soil. No description will convey

an adequate idea of the power of vegetation, and the rank luxuriance with which it operates at the root, along this plain of exhaustless fertility. Unhappily, here, as almost universally, nature has compensated for the prodigality of her gifts, on the one hand, by counterbalancing disadvantages on the other. Whenever the gifts of nature are offered with so little labor and in such abundance, as here, men will be found. But in the autumn you will enter but few houses in the whole distance, where some of the members of the family are not sick.

#### Bluffs on the Mississippi

Between the mouth of the Ohio and St Louis on the west side of the River, the bluffs are gradually generally near it, seldom diverging from it more than two miles. They are for the most part, perpendicular <sup>masses</sup> of limestone; sometimes shooting up into towers & pinnacles, presenting, at a distance, the aspect of the battlement, and towers of

an ancient city; sometimes rising 200 & 300 feet above the level of the river.

On the eastern side, in this distance, the bluffs diverge to a considerable distance from the river, and bound the American bottom, leading an alluvial belt.

The bluffs mark the boundary between the belt and the hills. They are as high and perpendicular as the bluffs on the opposite side of the river.

Most noticed towns near the east bank of the Mississippi, in Illinois, and opposite to the country about St Louis.

Edwardsville, on the Cahokia Creek 20 m. NE from St Louis, a village of considerable consequence; until within a few years the seat of government.

Belleville, in the center of Turkey-Hill settlement, 18 m SE of St Louis, and a few m E of the American bottom, a flourishing village in the midst of a compact settlement, and most excellent lands.

Alton, a new village a little above the mouth of Missouri. 4 ~~Four~~ years from its commencement it contained 100 houses and a respectable boarding school. Many

of the people immigrants from N York. From the favorability of its position ~~and from the~~ apparent healthiness ~~of its situation~~, it bids fair to become a town of consequence.

Carlisle situated on the W. banks of the Kaskaskia, on the great road from Shawneetown to St Louis, and from Cincinnati to St Louis. Boats of burthen, in good stages of water, ascend the river to this place- few places in the state more central to the resources of the Country.

Cahokia, on the creek of that name, is situated in the American bottom, a few miles below St Louis. It is one of the most ancient villages in the Country- its inhabitants chiefly French- of considerable extent.

Prairie du Rocher. 12 m above Kaskaskia- a French village in the American bottom, situated near a most beautiful lime bluff.

Kaskaskia, is situated on an extensive plain not far from the commencement of the American bottom, 11 miles

from the mouth of the river, on which it stands, and 6 miles from the nearest point of the Mississippi- one of the first establishments made by the French in the valley of the Mis<sup>ri</sup> and dates back farther than Philadelphia. It was once a place of great importance containing 7000 inhabitants. At present it numbers 160 houses and 1,000 inhabitants. A more beautiful situation for a town can hardly be imagined- in the center of a beautiful and gently sloping basin, on a fine navigable stream, and in the midst of a country, proverbial for its fertility. It is the seat of Justice for the County (of Randolph). has a bank, a printing office, a catholic church, and land office.

Vandalia, the present metropolis of the State; pleasantly situated on a high bank of the Kaskaskia river, in the center of a rich and thriving country. It has <sup>been</sup> founded but a few years. Many handsome brick buildings have arisen. A weekly

gazette is issued, and it exhibits in many respects, the aspect of a town, and has more than 50 houses.

(Albion, situated near Bon Pass Creek, and in the center of what is called the marine settlement, formed by Mr Birkbeck, Flower and other English immigrants. There are many wealthy farmers in the vicinity, that were once mariners. This place is in Edwards County, on the dividing ridge between little and great Wabash, in the east part of the State)

St Phillippe- in the American Bottom, 45 m. below Cahokia, a pleasant old French village (Brown's Western Gazetteer)

At Cahokia, Flint says, is the most numerous group of mounds we have seen. There is said to be 200 in all;- the largest on the Cahokia creek. Its form is that of a parallelogram; its circumference is given at 800 yards, and its height at 90 feet. There are also interesting mounds a little N of St Louis- like enormous

stacks. One called the falling garden is generally pointed out, as a great curiosity.

#### Fall of the Country in Illinois

Excepting Louisiana & Delaware, Illinois is the most level State in the Union. The far greater portion of the state is either vast plains or barrens, but gently rolling. We may travel on the vast prairies for days without encountering an elevation worthy to be called a hill. One vast prairie spreads from the shore of the Mississippi to lake Michigan; they are divided into wet and dry. The wet seem to have been timbered morasses, containing in many instances, peat and other fossil indications, with logs and the bones of animals, some feet below the surface. The alluvial prairies are high and dry, of a rich black loam and exceedingly fertile soil; and covered with a coarse grass of incredible size, chequered with groves of sparse trees.

The vast extent of level plains in this Country is an injury to it; there

is often not sufficient inclination to convey off the water that falls in rains. Even the high prairies, when they happen to be of a stiff soil, are too wet for cultivation. This land discharges its waters by evaporation, rendered still more noxious by the vast quantities of vegetation which have been steeping in there. Hence it happens that these beautiful countries are sometimes sickly, where every thing to the eye, would only promise health, as well as abundance.

From Cincinnati to St Louis the great road passes through the State in its whole width. More than 100 ms of it is high, dry & rich prairie; in all the distance of Illinois the margins of the streams are almost the only places, where timbered land is found; and the streams have only narrow skirts of wood. The Grand Prairie has a black friable, and sandy soil or loam, from 2 to 5 feet;



the next stratum a red clay mixed with fine sand from 5 to 10 feet; the third stratum a hard blue clay of a beautiful appearance, and greasy feeling, mixed with pebbles, & when exposed to the air emitting a factid smell. In this stratum, the water of the wells is found; which is of course, both disagreeable & unhealthy. The soil is of the first quality. In the season of flowers the eye and all the senses receive the highest gratification. In time of strawberries thousands of acres are reddened with them; and they are of the finest quality. But this country which strikes the <sup>eye</sup> do delightfully and where millions of acres invite the plough, wants timber for building, fencing and fuel. It wants water; and in too many instances the inhabitants want health.

Between Carlisle & St Louis, an extent of about 50 ms, we meet with woods, streams, hills, lime stone ledges, and a rolling country; although

we cross an occasional prairie  
 [ ] to the American bottom. On  
 the mouth of the road, and between  
 it and the Illinois, the surface  
 is generally more <sup>ir</sup>regular. Con-  
 siderable <sup>part</sup> the country may be termed  
 broken, and the hills abound in  
 stone coal. The bluffs stretching  
 along the American bottom; in  
 many places [ ] perpendicular  
 point of lime stone 300 feet high.

Though the country is very  
 fascinating to the eye of the traveller  
 it is by <sup>no</sup> means the most eligible  
 situation for settlers. Mr Flint thinks  
 many of the evils to which it is sub-  
 ject, may be remedied by the amelio-  
 ration of cultivation. Forests, he  
 says, may soon be raised upon the  
 prairies; Coal and peat may be  
 discovered for fuel, Hedges and ditch-  
 es may fence it; and pure wa-  
 ter may be found, by carrying  
 the wells below the stratum of  
 earth, that is supposed to impart  
 the sulphurous and disagreeable

taste which the water possesses.  
 But to me, it appears doubtful  
 whether a prairie country will,  
 under any circumstances, prove  
 healthy, unless where they are  
 very dry, and inclined planes give  
~~course~~ current to the waters that fall in rains.

Throughout the Northeastern states,  
ancient works, in many instances of a  
 surprising magnitude, of the ancient in  
 habitants are found. They resemble for  
 tifications, accompanied with large mounds  
 of earth. In the Scioto Country in Ohio,  
 they are numerous, and indicate  
 that a people once inhabited the country,  
 much more advanced in the arts than  
 the present Indians. In some instances  
 stone walls have been found of great  
 extent, though without the marks of  
 the hammer and chisel; and bricks simi  
 lar to ours, are said to be found, but  
 among the implements discovered none  
 of iron have been seen. Dr Drake  
 mentions implements of copper found  
 in a mound at Cincinnati; and this met  
 al was found among the mexican Indians.

### Face of the Country of Missouri

A large extent in the S.E. angle is low, swampy, full of lakes, in many places subject to inundations.

The best portion and most inhabited parts of the state are between the Missouri and Mississippi. It contains a surface delightfully rolling; in no part of the globe is there greater extents which are more easily traversed by carriages, of any description, where there are no roads.

Soil This <sup>state</sup> contains a greater portion of sand than the country on the Ohio, and is more loamy and friable and less stiff. Clayey soils are found, but they are small in quantity. The roads are generally clay, as the falling rain is absorbed by the soil. The rich uplands are of a darkish grey color; excepting about the ledmines, where it is redish like spanish brown. The poorer uplands have white oak, and a small shrubby species called pin oak, where the soil is of a light yellow color.

There are two kinds of fine timbered country:

one is 15 or 20 miles extent, south of the mine country; the other Boons lick settlement; and small extents of this land over all the state. In a state of nature it strikes the eye agreeably. The surface rolls gently- almost imperceptibly. It has the same trees and shrubs and grand vegetation that designates the rich alluviums, and at the same time, it has the diversified surface and the associated ideas of health, and springs of water that are naturally connected with the notion of uplands.

They are timbered with the same trees which the alluviums bear. Like those, they are surmounted with grape vines and free from under brush. The graceful pawpaw, the persimmon & wild cherry tree, all denoting rich soils, abound, and nearly as fertile as the bottoms of the Missouri or Mississippi.

The prairies are generally level, & of an intermediate character between the richer & poorer uplands. Alluvial prairies, universally rich and nearly as fertile as bottoms. Some of the upland prairies are rich. But there are scarcely

any lands in the state, sufficiently bad for cultivation, that have not fertility enough to bring good crops of corn without manure; and in many instances the poorer lands are better for wheat than the richer. The bottom of all the watercourses are rich, those of the Missouri are generally loamy, with a large portion of sand. But even when the proportion of sand seems to be in excess, the soil is of the richest character. Intermixed with the glaize or earth of a greasy & adhesive feeling, is a considerable proportion of marle or dissolved lime, which communicates to the soil, compounded of vegetable matter, and astounding fertility. The lands on the upper Mississippi bottom are blacker, more clayey, but marly & sandy. The bottoms of the smaller streams partake of the character of the region, through which they flow. On the whole the good lands have generally a great degree of fertility. The soil from the bottom of the deepest wells, appears no less fertile than that on the surface.

On the richer prairies & bottoms, tall and coarse grass, & weeds resembling hemp, rise of such a thickness, size and height, as almost to make it impossible to travel on horseback. The leaves of the trees & shrubs indicate the prolific vigor and power of nature.

The upper Mississippi is skirted with a prairie, commencing about 10 m above the mouth of Missouri and extending along the west bank 60 or 70 m. with an average width 4 + 5 m. The up lands are also extremely rich; but interspersed with round flint knobs often in regular cones, 200 to 300 feet high. In the SW. part of the state are tracts of poor lands, covered with yellow pine & bald rocky hills & even moving sands.

Productions Wheat 30 to 40 bushels the acre. Rye, barley & oats succeed well. Corn, from 50 to 75 bushels the acre, sometimes 100 is raised on the same <sup>space of</sup> ground & never suffer by drought, tho' sometimes severe. Flax is raised in good quantities and no better country for hemp. To

Tobacco is good and abundant.  
 Cotton is raised in the warm prairies  
 back of N Madrid. Sweet & Irish pota  
 toes succeed. It is believed the state  
 alone has lands, already fit for

Wheat }  
 Crops }

the plough, sufficient to produce  
 wheat enough for whole nations.

Prairies of hundreds & thousands of  
 acres, of first rate wheat lands, cov  
 ered with grass, and perfectly free  
 from shrubs & brushes invite the  
 plough; and if the country were  
 cultivated to a proper extent, it might  
 be the granary of the world.

A Supply }  
 for the }  
 Word }

Turnips and bulbous roots grow  
 to a great size; and pumpkins, &  
 squashes & melons are no where  
 in greater abundance.

Prairie grass cut before it has  
 seeded, would be a fodder equally  
 valuable, & perhaps superior to ti  
 mothy.

Above all countries, this is the  
 country of flowers. In the season  
 of flowers every prairie is an immense  
 flower garden- of different hues



as peach blossom, next a deeper red  
then the yellow and last, in autumn  
a brilliant gold hue.

Crabapple trees, pawpaws and persimmons are abundant. Wild hops cover the extent of the whole prairies. Pecans, hazlenuts, and nuts of different tribes of hickories are found in great quantities. The June grape ripens in that month, small, sweet & uncommon. The summer grape, small purple and tolerably rich, in the month of October; when carefully dried in the sun, are not much inferior to raisins. The winter grape is small and sour; by winter frosts becomes tolerably pleasant.

All the fruits of the northern and middle states thrive here; the apple here attains its utmost development; the tree 3 years from transplanting of the size of a mans wrist touching itself with fruit. Peach trees break down from the weight of its fruit. Pear trees, appricots & nectarines prosper. This seems to be the natural country of fruit trees. Apples are already abundant

in outer settlements. Barley yields a fine crop, and when converted to beer and porter, may furnish a good substitute for whisky, the minder of soul and body in new countries.

The mulberry is common in the woods and may be applied to the raising of silkworms & silk. The heats of the summer and dryness of the atmosphere peculiarly fit the soil for the cultivation of medicinal plants.

Wild Animals Bears, coyotes and panthers are as common as in the southern regions. Buffalos & Elks are only found in the prairies beyond the limits of the state. Deers are frequently seen from 4 to 20 in a drove even in the immediate vicinity of the most populous villages. Rattle snakes and copperheads, and ground vipers are found in the unsettled regions, near the knobs and [ ] hills. The small rattlesnake called snap pers live in great numbers in particular places on the prairies. The ponds lakes & rivers, during

the spring and autumn, and the migrating season, are literally covered with swans, pelicans, cranes, geese brants and ducks, of all the tribes & varieties. The birds of the quail kind or partridges, are numerous as also the prairie hen somewhat larger than the domestic hen. In the autumn of some seasons they are seen hovering over the corn fields, in flocks of hundreds. Turtle doves are numerous, as in some seasons are wild pigeons. Singing birds are not so common as in the country further south; or in the more settled regions of the north; but a variety are found here. The beautiful parroquet frequents the sycamore bottoms, and does much injury to the orchard and garden fruits.

Mr Flint compares the site of St Louis to that of Albany in N York. The ascent to the higher bank is not precipitous, & beyond this an extensive plain opens to view, covered with bushes & scrub oaks; beyond which is a naked prairie; the timber for 9 or 10 m. is cut away.

Such ~~are~~ is a condensed account from Flint's description of Missouri, and taking it alone, we should suppose the country ~~to be~~ a paradise. But there are serious drawbacks in the case.

The climate is rather unhealthy for northern people, before they become acclimated; more fevers prevail than in the northern regions, though some other <sup>diseases</sup> are more rare; but on the whole, Flint thinks it as healthy as our climate. But of this we entertain some doubts. Few new countries are as healthy as older ones in the same latitude.

As soon as the Country becomes thoroughly cultivated and good water can be obtained, which however may be difficult in the prairies, it will probably be healthy; and a most agreeable climate; alike free from the hot seasons of the southern states, and the long and cold winters of the northern.

Missouri River has a course of between 400 & 500 miles in the State. Prairies are scarcely seen on the banks within

the distance of the first 400 miles of its course. It is heavily timbered and yet from the softness of the wood, easily cleared. The water, though uncommonly turbid with a whitish earth, soon and easily settles, and is then remarkably pure pleasant and healthy. Its bottoms are considerably settled for a distance of 400 miles above its mouth. Charaton is the highest compact settlement; but the largest & most populous in the State is Boone's lick.

St Charles on the Missouri is a pleasant village of about 1200 inhabitants, 26 miles above the mouth of the River, and the same distance N.W. of St Louis. Back of the village is a large extent of level country, covered with hazle copses, yielding abundance of wild hops, grapes and prairie plums. At 2 miles distance below the town, opens the beautiful point prairie, and we know of no place in the western country, that has a more interesting one adjoining it, than this village. About one third of the inhabitants are French.

Proposed

Proposed Canal, or Rail Road, in Illinois

At a meeting of the citizens of Rock Island County, in the town of Stevinson, on the 7th of November 1836, a committee of six was selected to draught a memorial to the General Assembly of Illinois praying the passage of a Law for constructing a canal or railroad, commencing at Hennepin on the Illinois River, at or near the termination of the Illinois canal from Chicago, and there pursuing the nearest and best practicable route to Rock Island County, ending at this place, upon the eastern bank of the Mississippi. The route is represented as fine and generally level, not much elevated or dispersed, but at points gently undulating; and the length not probably exceeding 70 to 75 miles. This design is to transport merchandize from the Mississippi directly to Chicago, and there by the Lakes, and New York canal to Albany &c. John W Spencer was President of the meeting. The Committee D.G. Garersey, Joseph Conway, John S. Miller, T.H. Pendleton, Henry Powers & Joel Wells Jr.

### Milk Sickness

In Illinois and Missouri, in the extensive and rich bottoms, the Cows are subject to a terrible and inexplicable, or at least as yet, unexplained disease called Milk Sickness. It occurs most frequently in Autumn, about that period when the first severe frosts happen. From this circumstance, and the fact, that the cattle are then driven by necessity to pasture on succulent vines and herbage of the forest, that remain unhurt by the frost, it is generally supposed to be occasioned by the eating some poisonous vegetable. The animal becomes apparently weak in the limbs; can travel but a little distance without falling; seems languid and stupid, and so continues to droop until it dies. At this time under the influence of the sickness, the milk of cows taken in any quantity, seems to produce the same disease in men or whatever animals swallow the milk. The persons are subject to extreme nausea, faintness, vertigo, recklessness, and death. The only prevention  
taken

taken by farmers, is to pen their cattle at the season and to be very cautious in the use of the milk.

On a full and careful perusal of Flint's Geography, I am of opinion that the western is a fine country & will become an important part of the United States. But in its early stage it is subject to ~~many~~ some serious inconveniences; among which are its fevers and scarcity of good water. In the prairie countries, there may soon be a want of timber for fuel, fencing and building; but as fossil coal is abundant in many places, fuel may not be much wanted; and hedge and ditching may be substituted for <sup>timber</sup> fences. For building, stone and brick will be good substitutes, and these will, at length, be the resort even in New England. Yet were it not for the severity of our winters in the Connecticut Valley, I should think it preferable to that of the Mississippi. Pulmonic and other cold weather diseases may be more frequent in the former



than <sup>in</sup> the latter, but on the whole it is believed that no part of the United States is more salubrious than the Connecticut Valley. Men of little propensity and large families of male children may find it for their interest to migrate to the western regions, where lands may be obtained at a low rate; and such families rendered independent by industry. But for the independent families here the inducements to migrate to the west, are by no means forcible. If he is industrious and economical here, he may be happy; and without these he would be unhappy there.

Industrious & economical single men  
of temperate habits without property here, may also find it for the interest to migrate to the west; but without these gratifications, it is of no consequence where they reside; for they would remain poor and miserable in the garden of Eden. In the western Country they might become hunters and expert in the use of the rifle, but in <sup>no</sup> place respectable & useful citizens.

9. Project of Greenfield for obtaining possession of the North part of Deerfield.

During the session of the Legislature of 1836 a petition was presented praying that the part of Deerfield lying north of Deerfield River and Sheldons brook might be set off to Greenfield. The petition though signed by the people living on the land, and others owning land on it, we say was a project of Greenfield, or rather a party in that town, who feel power and forget right; for many honest people there, were opposed to the unjust plan.

A viewing Committee was appointed who, after examining the land, reported in favor of the petition. In the Genl Court the subject was referred to the Committee on towns, who after hearing of the case, again reported in favor of the petition. Under these circumstances Deerfield supposed their case was rather desperate; but the town determined to make all possible legal opposition to so unjust a measure. In February a bill was brought forward

See page }  
37 of our  
No. 3 }

in the Legislature for setting off the land, and after much debate in the house, was rejected by a majority of 42.

A plain statement of facts it seems convinced a majority of the house that the petition was got up by an overbearing party in Greenfield, and they and not the petitioners, were the supporters of the project. Their brow beating system however, had not the desired effect; and a respectable majority, determined that a scheme so unjustifiable, was not to be carried by chicane. We hope the gentlemen who hover about the Court house of Franklin, will learn one lesson, viz that although they govern the County, they cannot govern the Commonwealth; and that "pride and falsehood, however fortified by time, and strengthened by names of dignity and worth, cannot withstand the humble, and well directed assault of imaculate truth"<sup>1</sup>.

The defeat of the gentlemen will be most mortifying, and they will leave no stone unturned to affect their project.

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<sup>1</sup> A quote from *The Anti-Masonic Review, and Magazine*, by Henry Dana Ward, published New York 1828, page 36.

#### 10. Recipe for making great Men

The following is found to be successful in these days, particularly in our Legislature. Soon after the Court assembles and an opportunity has been given for a display of light loquacity, generally by young gentlemen who have taken a few flights at the bar, but some obsequious young man, if possible one who has delivered an address on temperance or school education in his village, and has a little of the [ ]<sup>1</sup> be selected to write home to the Editor of his village <sup>paper</sup> describing the wonderful powers of certain "leading members" of the several counties, neglecting to notice, all who have less skill at chattering, however able they may be in legislating; at the same time hint at the radicalism of those opposed to his dictations. This appears now to have a wonderful effect. And although the new fledged geniuses they are endearing to place on the pinnacle, are ignorant of the whole circle of sciences other than their limited professions. they are undoubtedly the first. Here we +

+are likely to be flooded  
by great men. Mirabile dictu!

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### Appendix

Friday March 17<sup>th</sup> 1837. This day out people assembled at Lawrence's Tavern, to express their joy at the defeat of the people of Greenfield in their scheme of severing the ancient town of Deerfield and acquiring possession of the Northern part. In the morning 42 guns were fired, in honor of the majority in our favor in the house of representatives; and at 2 oclock P.M. about 100 persons partook of a fine dinner at Mr Lawrences. Spirited Resolutions were unanimously ~~past~~ adopted and a great number of sentiments given; all neat and [ ]. At evening a superb bon fire blazed from

the deserted peak of our mountain, and a [ ] Balloon ~~took its~~ took flight to the upper regions. At no time have I seen a more unanimous and spirited explosion of feeling than on this occasion. The whole closed without the least confusion.

We have called this attempt at a Greenfield measure, in defiance of all right, or that courtesy due from one neighboring town to another; but it should be known that the people residing in the meadows of that town were opposed to the measure, and remonstrated against it, like honorable and peaceful men. The fact is the project was got up by a few leading men residing about the Court House, who fed power and forget right. It is hoped the result will teach them that the right of the people cannot be thus trifled with; and that if they can govern the County they cannot govern the State. The decision of the house is important to the people of the State as well as to ourselves; and proves that plain truth is not to be thrust out of sight by sophistry however artfully applied.

It is to be regretted that cases of this kind should occur; as they tend to interrupt the harmony and good feelings which ought to exist in community. But when a few men undertake to rule, in a republic, it is proper that they should receive the indignant frowns of the people, and be brought down to their proper level. A different course would be destructive to republican rights.

One fact in regard to this measure should be borne in mind. It was <sup>indeed</sup> attempted under the color of petitioners, residing on, or who owned land in the territory; but these petitioners generally abandoned the project, and the expense of agents where any occurred, were defrauded by the town of Greenfield, and the representatives were chosen, for 1837, with a view to convey the project into success. Of this we have incontestable proof, by a handbill they very foolishly published at the turn of the [ ] of representatives, which fell into our hands.



Book Out March 1- 1837

x Wrothingtons History of Dedham Jon<sup>a</sup> A Saxton

x Cavello Philosophy, 2<sup>d</sup> vol to Mr Boutelle

x History of Berkshire

Dr SW Williams

x Terrible Tractation

Mr Aldich

all returned

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#### Note

In modern Geography it is common to use the terms Basin and Valley.

Basin denotes the entire space drained by a river; Valley the space watered by a secondary or confluent stream.

Thus the Mississippi basin includes all the country on the river, and its confluent streams; and the vallies of Missouri, Illinois, Ohio and other confluent make up the basin.

The term bottom is used to denote the low lands on Rivers, or what in New England, we call meadows. The higher lands, when open, we call prairies and are of two kinds, wet & dry. All are called alluvion. The elevations on the margins of the bottoms, are called bluffs with is hills.